

**Citizen's Coordinating Council
Pittsfield High School
February 3, 1999
Meeting Highlights**

Prepared by the Massachusetts Office of Dispute Resolution.

Participants

28 members of the CCC were present. There were 19 people in the audience.

Welcome and Agenda Review

All members introduced themselves. Jane asked if anyone had any comment on the meeting highlights. Hearing none, she then reviewed the agenda.

Announcements and Other Pre-Presentation Activities

Art Bergeron, a new member of the CCC, introduced himself. He is the new Chief Counsel for the MA Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA) and is the MA NRD Trustee. He conveyed a message from EOEA Secretary Durrand of his desire to "empower" the CCC and to help them address issues on a watershed basis.

Representative Larkins CCC representative provided a brief overview of the recent PEDA amendments. Amendments cover PEDA membership terms, \$4M commitment, and a clause that allows PEDA to enter into an agreement on payment.

Presentation: Draft Removal Action Workplan-Upper ½-Mile Reach of Housatonic

It was noted that the draft plan has been submitted to the various government agencies and that GE will meet with them yet to discuss the draft plan once they have reviewed it.

EPA noted they will be meeting with MA DEP and then provide comment. EPA also noted that people should feel free to comment as CCC members, organizations, or individuals. He asked for people to get their comments in as quickly as possible so they may be considered as EPA mediates the final arrangements.

Stuart Mazur of Blasland, Bouck, and Lee, Inc. (BBL), the consultant that formulated the draft plan presented an overview of the draft Removal Action Work Plan. He noted that this is a draft and that he is looking for feedback. They will decide later on best forum to respond to input.

The presentation was followed by a question and answer period. The questions or comments included, but were not limited to the following:

?? Non GE property does not seem to be covered. EPA noted that this report is only for river remediation only (the river, banks, and sediments). Properties will be addressed

separately and at a later date. EPA expressed the desire to address both areas together if possible, but may not be able to do so.

- ?? Concern that the soil sampling not deep enough. How much “contamination” will be left behind, plumes and incomplete cleanup? How will DNAPL be dealt with as discovered? BBL noted they have not attempted to estimate the volume left but instead are looking at concentration levels. They do not expect to encounter additional DNAPL but have contingency plans if they do.
- ?? What are the plans for disposing of the PCB’s? The PCB’s will be placed in consolidation area on-site. There was much discussion of this issue. To be discussed further at a later meeting when consolidation plans are presented.
- ?? What kind of upstream PCB testing has been done? Agencies are working on collecting data and will look at impact on areas to be remediated once data analyzed.
- ?? What was the maximum flood event used for the model? The 100-year event was used to look at relative stability of the armor in river and possibility of increased flooding in adjacent areas due to emplacement of armor and/or habitat improvements.
- ?? Were benthic communities reviewed and how to restore? No, area includes coarse sand, and will use gravel to change/improve flow.
- ?? Any long term monitoring of downstream fish communities. Yes, using biota and water column.
- ?? Questions of track record of capping, dependability when uses this extensively. The Army Corps of Engineers issued guidelines. Their guidelines are based on 15 years of studies from past projects showing effectiveness of capping. Conditional approval of given by agencies to concept. BBL also noted that capping was used extensively based on request of agencies.
- ?? Will a trust fund be established in case the capping does not work as planned? No fund has been established but the agreement does have provisions for handling this downstream.
- ?? Questions about the use of geo-textiles so extensively; the 15-year life seems inadequate. What steps will be taken to address fabric failure? EPA noted that this is being negotiated.
- ?? Where is the discussion of river walks, clean up to recreational standards? Concern about Lyman Street parking lot - will such adjacent areas be cleaned to recreational standards. EPA noted that the banks to be cleaned to recreational standards. GE noted that they agreed to discuss greenways at a later date so the riverwalks should be part of the NRD (greenways). GE also noted their willingness to discuss Lakewood area riverwalks.
- ?? Questions on the specifications for tree plant. Why are the large trees being replaced with smaller trees? It was noted that the large trees cannot be transplanted successfully on the steep banks; but that the sizes are consistent with Building 68. Also many large trees must be taken down to do the work. Will look at protection issues.

- ?? Wont material slide around caps to non-capped areas. Tried to take this into account in planning.
- ?? How extensive have the options to landfilling been considered. There was much concern about this issue. GE noted that they have looked at alternatives. On-site storage was part of the agreement in principle and is linked to other actions; cannot be separated out without disturbing other agreed upon actions.
- ?? Concern that there is only a 3-year monitoring of the cap planned and that only a non-scientific visual inspection to be done. There are provisions for monitoring after high water, low water, ice events, etc. Comments were noted.

All agreed on the need to discuss the plan in more detail in order to provide input. The CCC also wanted the person from the Army Corps of Engineers to meet with them to discuss the model.

A request was made for more “prolonged conversation” and interaction among the CCC; people felt they need more time to discuss issues among themselves. They also noted that they need a forum to express opinion in order to impact proposed work; is the CCC this forum? If so, how will this be done?

EPA noted that all comments will become part of official record to be submitted to the judge during the approval process.

Jane then facilitated a brief discussion on the creation of an ad hoc sub group to meet on the draft plan. 15 people expressed interest. A special CCC meeting was then planned for February 11, 1999 from 5:30 PM to 8 or 8:30 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 PM.

Next meeting: March 3 at 5:30 p.m. at Pittsfield High School, subject: open

To prepare for next meeting:

- Arrange 2/11/99 meeting and representative from Army Corps of Engineers.
- Send out draft Agenda for 3/3/99 meeting and 2/3/99 meeting notes.